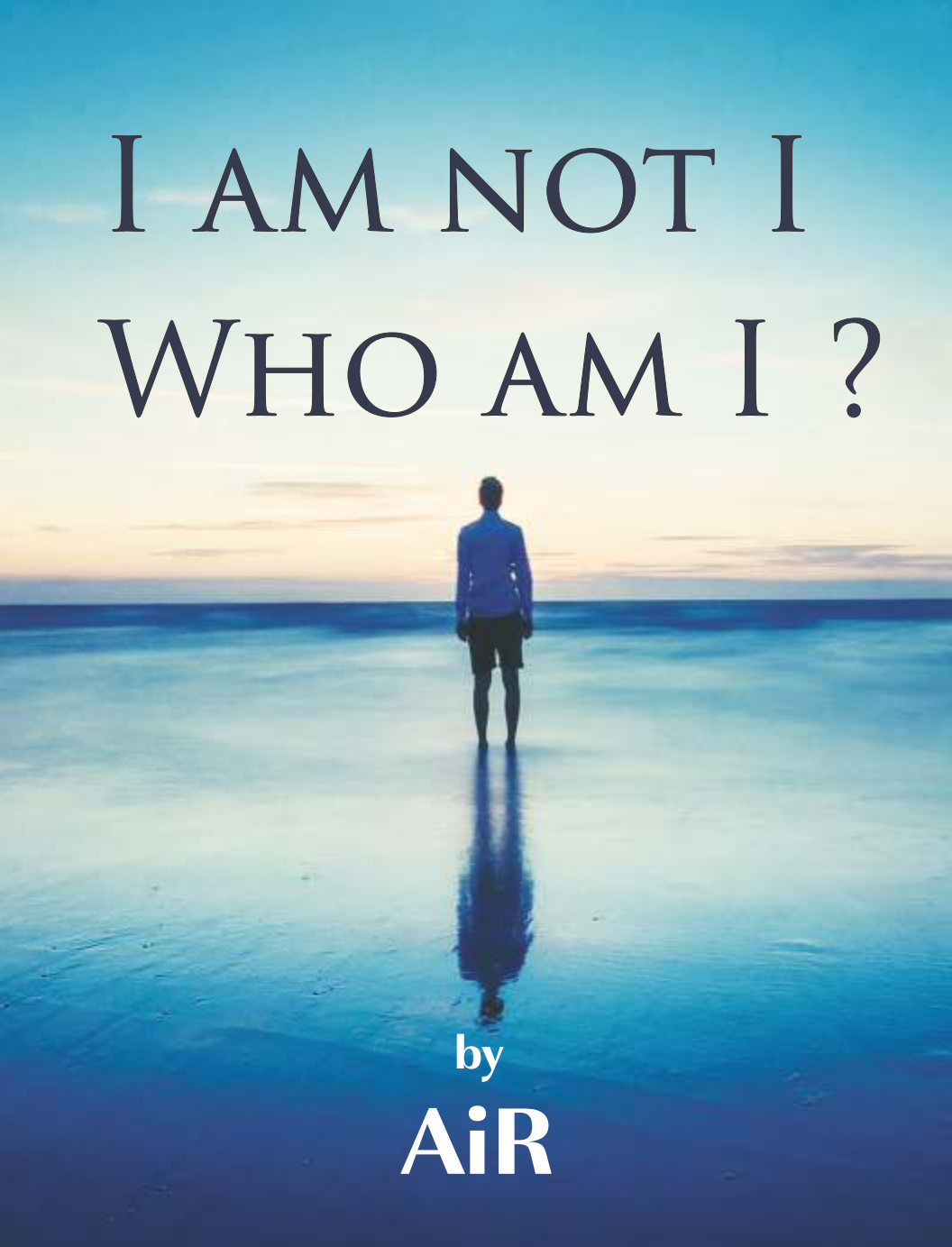
I am not I

Who am I ?



by

AiR

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

I am not I
Who am I ?

by

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I AM NOT I
WHO AM I ?

by

AiR

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My Source of Inspiration!

Every effect has a cause. A gold ring is nothing without the metal gold. A wave is nothing without the ocean water. A statue is nothing without the clay. I am nothing without my Mentor, my Master Dada J.P. Vaswani. I am just an effect; he is the cause. Without him, this book would not be possible. He is the Energy that has given light to the Energy that is within me. I would have lived and died like an ego, a mind and a body. He has guided me, guarded me, moulded me and led me forward to a path of realizing the Truth. He has painstakingly taken effort for more than 25 years - day by day, event by event, and situation by situation. He has taken me out from darkness and showed me the light. He has led me from ignorance to wisdom. He has taught me, he has loved me, and he is the heart of every thought that emerges in this Jiva that exists. Every thought that provoked me, every question that was not answered, and every confusion that clouded the mind, he was the solution! Like a magician, he would just wave his spiritual wand for answers to appear. I bow down and express my sincere gratitude to my Master.

PREFACE

I always thought I was Ravi Melwani. I was proud of who I was. I was the founder of a brand Kidskemp that revolutionized retailing in India. For 25 years, whatever I touched turned to gold. It was one success after the other – Kidskemp, Big Kidskemp, Toys Kemp and Kemp Fort. We grew about 100% every year. I was considered to be a marketing wizard, covered by every possible newspaper, magazine and television.

One day, I realized that the goal of life was not just to make millions, but rather to be happy. I found happiness comes from making a difference, not just making money. At the age of 40, I shut down my business and transformed my life with a new name – RVM and started the RVM Foundation. It was a non-profit organization with a mission to make a difference doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational, and Spiritual. I evolved from leading a life of pleasure that came from achievement to leading a life of peace that came from contentment and fulfilment. I was living the RVM Philosophy of "Rejoice, Value life and Make a difference". I considered myself to be the happiest man on Earth as I was travelling to a new

country every month and living a life of my dreams.

One day, my mentor provoked me and asked me, "What is the purpose of your life? If I had achieved everything that I wanted to, then why was I alive?" These questions inspired me to go on a quest, a search, to discover the true meaning and purpose of life. I packed dozens of books to read and I made a list of questions that I wanted to find answers for.

1. Where did I actually come from?

2. Where would I go after death?

3. Who is God? Where is God? What is God?

4. Where is heaven and hell?

5. What is the soul?

6. Is reincarnation real?

7. What is the Law of Karma?

8. What is the purpose of life?

9. What is Enlightenment?

I studied every possible religion and put my hands on whatever scriptures I could get. I spoke to several masters and browsed hundreds of websites.

I found the answers to all my questions through a process of study, reflection and realization. But along with the answers, I was shocked to realize something that I was completely ignorant of. I realized that I had a body but I was not the body. I realized that I had a mind, but I was not the mind. I realized that my ego was a dominant part of my life, but I was not the ego. I was suddenly faced with questions that baffled me – Who was I? Who am I? This question kept repeating itself in my quest for the truth. I realized that 'I' was not 'I'. In this book, I will share what I realized. It may wake you and shake you out of the very skin you live in. Let's start!

“Am I Ravi V. Melwani?
Am I RVM?
After 48 years…,
I realized I am not 'I'”

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"You may see Me
as the "Skin",
but I am the One
that lives Within!"

1

Who am I?

Peter flew in from the United States. He was in search of answers for questions about life that were troubling him.

After a long search, he finally found a Master whom he believed had answers to his questions.

The Master asked him, “Who are you?”

“I am Peter”, he replied.

“That's your name”, said the Master; “I asked, ‘Who are you?’”

Peter replied, “Yes Sir, I am Peter Johnson from New York.”

The Master replied, “I didn't ask you from where you are. I asked you, 'Who are you?'”

He answered, “I am an American.”

“I know that”, said the Master.

“I am a Christian”, Peter answered.

“I didn't ask you for your religion”, responded the Master.

“I am 40 years old”, he replied.

The Master said, “I didn't ask you your age. Who are you?”

“I am the son of Mr. Robert Johnson and Mrs. Mary Johnson. I am married to Sarah, and I have two daughters – Elisa and Rachel”, Peter attempted again.

“I didn't ask you for your relationship with your parents, wife and children. I asked you – Who are you?” questioned the Master.

“I am sorry. Now I understand your question. I am a doctor at the New York Medical Centre, with an MBBS and an MD from the New York Institute of Medicine, and a member of YPO”, replied Peter.

“My dear Sir”, said the Master, “I didn't ask for your profession, your occupation or your education. I asked you, ‘Who are you?’”

“I am ‘me’, the one you see. I stand before you. I am wearing a suit and a tie. Can't you see me?” said Peter.

The Master replied, “I can see your suit and I can see your tie, and I can see your body, but who are you?”

The exasperated American was nervous beyond words! “I am 'me'”, he said, “…this body, this mind and this

intelligence. I am a millionaire from the USA, and you are asking me 'Who are you?' Sir, I am 'me'. Don't you understand me?"

"You may have millions, just as you have a body and a mind, but who is it that has a body and has a mind? Who is that 'you'?" asked the Master.

Peter retorted, "I don't know! I don't know who I am!"

Isn't it strange that a millionaire, an educated doctor from United States could not answer a simple question – "Who are you?"

But the irony is that if I was asked the same question or if you were asked the same question, we wouldn't be able to answer it either. We don't know who we are!

We think we are a body, a mind, an ego and a soul or a complex of some of these, but we are not the body. That is why we say – this is my body. And we are also not the mind. We say, "My mind is wandering". Are we the ego that continues to say – "It is me"? How can we be the soul, when we don't understand the meaning of soul?

What is the BODY?

The body is the physical part of our existence that eats,

breathes, moves and reproduces. It is our outer shell that we can see, touch and feel. Most commonly understood as "who we are", our body consists of our head, our limbs and our chest. We have 5 senses, several action organs and other vital organs such as the heart, brain, kidney, and lungs that constitute our body. The skeleton along with all the body systems and processes create a human being. Most people think that they are this body. We consider these eyes to be me, these hands to be me, and even the hair to be me. That's why the beauty industry is booming and the cosmetic industry is flourishing with eye care, hair care, dental care. The body is a physical part of us controlled by a subtle part – the mind.

What is the MIND?

The mind is the subtle part of our body. It is that aspect of us that is known to think, remember, recall and choose. Generally thought to be contained in the brain, the mind actually functions through all the nerves and senses. It is like the software of the body machine. The mind consists of several domains – a thought factory that produces thoughts, up to 50 thoughts a minute, a memory that is far bigger than any computer, an intellect that discriminates and decides, and an ego.

Most of us think that we are the mind because it is the mind that is the controller of the senses, the body, the thoughts and the decisions that we make. The mind seems to be the king or the ruler of the body, and most people think, "I am my mind and my mind is me".

What is the EGO?

The ego is the identity that a person creates for himself. It is the "I-ness", the "my-ness" and the "mine-ness". Generally, it is considered to be that aspect of the individual that seeks to create one's own self-esteem. The ego exists as long as a person is alive.

We exist as long as the ego exists. When one realizes that we are not the body – but we have a body, and we are not the mind – but we have a mind, one transcends the ego. The ego ceases to exist!

As long as we say, "I did something" or "I want something"; as long as we say, "This is my body and my mind"; or as long as we say, "This house is mine, and this car is mine", we submit to being the ego. The ignorance that envelopes us is such that although we know that we come empty-handed at birth and we go empty-handed at death, all through life we permit ourselves to be in the clutches of ignorance, believing that we are the ego.

What is the SOUL?

The soul can be defined as the spiritual, immortal part of a human being that is subtle and non-material. It can't be touched or felt. It is energy that gives life to the human body. However the soul is often confused with the mind, which is the other subtle part of the human being. There is no empirical evidence of the existence of the soul. But through inference, we realize that every human being has a soul. Death happens when the soul departs and the human being has no breath; we become lifeless. Therefore, the soul is the life energy that exists in a human being from birth to death.

Very often, souls are labelled as "good" soul or "bad" soul. In reality, souls cannot be good or bad, only a body or mind appears good or bad on the basis of our actions and behaviour when a soul gives life to it. The soul is pure energy. If one reflects upon the soul, it is invisible, but all-powerful. It exists, but it can't be touched or felt. There is no evidence of where it comes from or goes. The soul is consciousness. Spiritualists believe that the soul energy is omnipresent like air that is everywhere. The soul leaves the human body at death and merges with the universal consciousness, just like air when released from a balloon merges with the atmosphere.

Man has progressed from pin to plane. Technology can connect you on a video call anywhere in the world. We make cars, ships and supersonic jets. We have invented thousands of instruments and gadgets. But it is sad, that we have not discovered who we truly are!

We Have Discovered Everything, Except Ourselves!

We human beings have practically discovered everything, but we have not discovered ourselves. We go under the oceans to discover what lies on the bed of the ocean floor. We go into the skies to discover the distant planets and stars. But we don't go within to discover ourselves. Even if we go within, we only touch the tip of our physical and emotional self. Scientists and psychologists are busy studying the body and mind. But not many people are studying what lies beyond that. According to biologists, an adult has 100,000 miles of blood vessels - enough to wrap around the Equator nearly four times. I was flabbergasted to read this and I thought that there must be some mistake here. But it is true. Each human being is a true wonder of the world, with eyes, nose, ears, tongue, hands, head and heart. We have 7 wonders and more within each one of us. In fact, the whole universe is full of wonders. And instead of realizing that everything is a miracle, we are trying to prove that nothing is a miracle!

There is a power beyond human comprehension that controls everything – rotation that causes day and night, revolution of the earth around the sun, seasons, life, birth and death. The wind that blows, the water that flows and the sun that glows are caused by an energy. There is energy everywhere, and it is that energy within us that we need to discover. It is sad that we human beings don't focus our time and life on what truly matters. What truly matters is to discover who we are.

Fairy Tales Conceal the Truth

From the time we are born, we are told stories. These fairy tales become the foundation of our life. They become our belief system and stop us from the realization of the truth.

Story of the Stone Cat

Once, there lived a spiritual master who along with his disciples would meditate every evening. The teacher had a cat and when the teacher and disciples would meditate, the cat would play around, distracting everyone. Seeing this, the teacher ordered his disciples to tie the cat every evening. This went on, and soon it became a daily ritual to tie that cat so that their evening meditation was not disturbed.

Years later, after the teacher died, the disciples continued to tie the cat before the start of the meditation practice. When the cat eventually died, they got one more cat to be tied. Many cats died, and finally, they made a cat out of stone and started worshipping the cat. This had no relevance or logic, but it became a ritual that was rigorously followed.

We humans often create rituals and follow them without understanding the reason why, just like the stone cat.

Solar Eclipse Myths

Science has explained several natural phenomena, which were earlier attributed to strange myths and superstitions.

In fact, it is interesting to know how different cultures and countries viewed occurrences like the solar eclipse.

In the past, people considered the eclipse to be an evil happening. It evoked fear and was considered ominous. It was believed that a demon was causing the eclipse. Hence, people would gather in large numbers banging pots and pans, making a ruckus to frighten the demon away.

Ancient Hindu mythology attributed the solar eclipse to Rahu. After Rahu was beheaded by the Gods for drinking

Amrita, the ambrosia of Gods, it was said that his head went scuttling high into the sky and swallowed the sun.

The Chinese believed that it was a heavenly dragon that caused the solar eclipse by eating the sun. Etymologically, the Chinese word for eclipse is *chih* or *shih,* which means to eat.

In Vietnam, the Chinese "dragon" was replaced by a giant frog, while the Norwegians claimed that it was a pack of wolves that ate up the sun. For the Koreans, the eclipse happened because of certain mythical dogs that were trying to steal the sun.

Now we know that all this is but folklore, "old wives tales", but even today in some cultures, people continue to be superstitious and impose self-fabricated rules and follow rituals to ward off the supposedly evil effect of the eclipse!

Story of Santa Claus

Till date, kids around the world are told about Santa Claus – that he will come during Christmas and leave them with surprise gifts. The whole world focuses all its attention on the celebration of Christmas and Santa Claus without realizing that Santa Claus is a myth. However, those

seeking to understand the root of these beliefs discover the truth surrounding them and from where they stemmed from - like the story of Saint Nicholas and related events. But what do all these fairy tales do? These stop us from investigating the truth about who we are and where we came from. Why are we alive and what is the purpose of life? What makes us miserable and how can we be truly happy. The important issues that we must contemplate on get shrouded by fairy tales that are motivated by selfish interests. Every day, new stories are created, and we human beings are happy to take a flight to fantasy land.

But what is the truth? Is it not important to find out who we are and what is the purpose of life?

The World's Biggest Joke

The biggest joke in this world is that we don't know who we are, where we came from, where we will go, why we are here and what we must do. But we behave like we know everything! It's so strange that all of humanity is so busy living that they don't understand the purpose of life. We live and die in ignorance of the truth. We are so absorbed by the world that we give no importance to question our existence. Although nothing belongs to us eventually, our entire life is spent on creating possessions. Isn't this a big joke?

It would be truly amusing if one were to have an aerial view of humanity. We are all searching for happiness, when in reality, happiness is within. We live and die without the realization of the truth. The whole world is a theatre and we are all actors doing our part, but we have misunderstood the world – we think it's real. It is just like people going to a theatre to see a movie; they start crying when they see emotional scenes being projected, as if the movie is "real".

When will humanity wake up to the truth to realize the drama and move from a life of illusions to truly living?

How can I be something that is constantly changing?

Imagine that I died. Am I the dead body that lies on the floor? No! I say, "I am not the body. I was the one who was alive". But who was I? Was I the old man that lived 75 years? Or was I the 8-pound baby that was just born? How could I keep changing, from an infant to a toddler, then to a teenager, an adult and an old man? I asked myself, "Who am I?"

Science says that every part of the body is recreated by the regeneration of cells, which means that every 5 to 7 years we have a new body. Every cell of our body is completely

changed. So if I am 50 years old, my body has already changed 7 times, including the cells in my heart, my liver and in my lungs. So obviously I can't be something that is constantly dying and is being reborn. Yes, I have a body that is constantly regenerating, but I am not that body. I am what I am and I must find out who I am.

The mind also keeps changing. It's calm and then stressed. It gets agitated and then meditates. We know that our mind is constantly changing. We can feel it as it thinks up to 50 thoughts a minute.

Obviously, I can't be the body or mind that is constantly changing. Am I the consciousness within that is aware of the constantly changing body and mind? Am I not the body and mind? It is strange for me to be something yesterday, something else today and something different tomorrow.

The reality is that the 'I am' is constant; it doesn't change. It experiences change, but it remains the same. It is eternal and unchanging, and it experiences all that is transitory and evolving.

Who are we? Spiritual seekers have been on this quest for long, but very few have got close to finding answers. The

truth is very simple. You are not you. It is difficult to accept, to digest, to understand and to believe, but it is the truth. One who is told this spontaneously responds – "What do you mean? If I am not I, then who am I?" Let's find out.

The best way to find out 'Who I am' is to first find out 'Who I am NOT!

"We think we are this body.
We think we are this mind.
But who we truly are,
we cannot find."

2

What ‘I’ am Not?

Let us try some mental gymnastics. It will be a fun exercise to realize the truth. Although it may sound ridiculous in the beginning, don't give up till you are done. The end result will be worth your efforts.

What am I? If I am not my name, my body, my mind, the relationship that I enjoy with my near and dear ones, my profession, my occupation, or my education, then what am I? We all think we are "me". But who is that "me"? And then suddenly, we are lost. We experience ourselves, but we are not able to define who we are. When we go to the dictionary to find out what is "I", it is surprising, but the dictionary defines it as the 9th alphabet of the English language. Is that all we are? Of course not! We know we are "me", but what is that "me"? The best way to find out is to find out what we are not. As we keep eliminating what we are not, we will be rewarded with the realization of who we are.

Am I "you"? Of course not, I know that I am not "you". You are you, and I am I. How can I be you? I am not you.

Am I this book, or that table or that television? Ridiculous! How can I be this or that? I am "I". I am not this, I am not that. We all have at least that much common sense to understand that we are not this and that.

Then, what am I? Am I my car? Is this some kind of a joke – how can I be my car? I have a car, I drive the car, I love my car, but I know the difference between me and my car. Am I my house? Nonsense! How can I be my house? I live in my house. I love my bed. I am proud of my toilet, but I am not my house. I am intelligent enough to understand the difference between me and my house.

So then, what am I? Am I this body? Yes. I think I am this body. Everybody thinks I am this body. The body has a head, hands, legs, eyes and I am all of this. But the question arises –"What am I? Am I the eyes or am I all the senses and all the organs?" I am confused that I thought I was the body, but now I am thinking, I have a body, but I am not the body. Just like I have a car, and I have a house, this is another place where I exist. How can I be the body, when I say I have a body? Therefore, I am different from the body and it means that I am not the body. We shall soon do an anatomy of the body to find out.

Then what am I? Aha! I must be the mind. My mind thinks, feels and remembers. After all, isn't that me? I must be the mind. But then, I can feel my mind worrying, I watch it wandering. Therefore, I now realize I have a mind, but am I the mind? How can I be the mind, I am different from it. I am not the mind! We shall do a detailed analysis to be sure of this.

Now this puzzles me. I am so clear that I am not my Nike shoes, my Armani jeans, my Polo sweatshirt, nor am I my favourite Rayban glasses that I wear. I wear all these, but I am different from what I wear. I am the one who wears them, like I wear the body. I am not the body that I wear. I am not even the mind that thinks and worries. I am quite clear that I am something else.

Am I something, or am I nothing? Of course I am something. I know I am something. But now, I don't know who I am or what I am. I am not Mohammed – that's my name. I am not a Muslim – that's my religion. I am not a lawyer – that's my occupation. I am not the son of Kasim – that's my relationship with my father, nor am I the husband of Shania or the father of Naushad. I am not the villa on the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, nor am I the Mercedes Benz that I drive. The height of my body is 5'8". But that is my body, not me. I was educated in a law school, but my intellect and mind are also instruments that belong to me, and not me. Who am I?

Suddenly, I start realizing that like I have a bank account, and cash, and credit cards; like I have a Rolex watch, and a wardrobe of beautiful clothes, I also have a body. I have hands, and feet, and hair that I can touch and feel. I have a nose and ears that can smell and hear. I have a mind that is

thinking and analysing. Yes, these are the many things that I have, but none of these are who I am.

I am the one who has all this. I am different from these. I know that I am none of these. I am absolutely sure. But, there is only one question that is unanswered – I don't know who I am!

"As long as I do not realize
who I am not,
I will never realize who I am."

3

Am I the Body? – An Anatomy!

We are so obsessed with our body that we refuse to accept we are not the body. It is crazy for someone to tell me that I am not this person that I always thought I was! Suddenly, some idiot tells me that I am not my body. How dare somebody say that? Of course, I am the body. I feel I am the body. I see with my eyes. I touch with my hands. I walk with my legs. How can anybody say I am not the body? I refuse to accept that I am not the body. I am the body and I will be the body.

If we want to continue living with ignorance, we can. We too can be enveloped in the eternal ignorance that we are the body, although we so clearly say that my hand is hurt, my legs are tired and my head is bursting. The real me that seems to be somewhere inside possibly knows that I have a body, but I am not the body. 'I' experience the body and all that it senses but am I the body?

The best way to find out if I am the body, either wholly or partly or somewhere deep inside, is to do an anatomy of the body. Probably this will give me the answer – whether I am the body or not.

Suppose, I cut my nails and throw them away. What happened? The nails were part of me, but now they are not. I don't think I have lost much of myself. But what if I

cut my finger or rather, my wrist or further still, my arm and keep it on the table. What happens to me or my body? The arm will soon lose its vitality. It is no more a part of me. It was a part of my body, but now, it is not. But I still remain. It was my arm, but it is not my arm anymore. It is just an arm that is lifeless, lying dead on the table.

Hypothetically, I take off the other arm, take off one leg, and the other leg. The same thing happens. I still remain, except I have no hands and legs. But I still am. Let's go further. I take off my eyes. I become blind, but I still exist. I chop off my ears. Oh my God! Now, I am blind and deaf, and to make matters worse, I cut off my nose. The anatomy goes further. I take off my kidney; I can still live. If I take off both, I would need dialysis every day to survive. Doctors these days are proud to say that they can take out a failed heart, and replace it with an artificial heart. Medical science is still developing. So look at me now. I am limbless, blind, deaf and without several organs. But I am still alive. At what point will I cease to exist?

The anatomy continues. The search is for "me". An expert is called in to peel my skin. He starts with the outer layer of the epidermis. Please don't get nervous. This is just hypothetical. He goes on. I am peeled, but I am still full of blood, flesh and bones. The blood starts oozing out, till I

am bloodless. The flesh falls apart and all that is left of me is a skeleton, with a few remaining vital organs. Of course, if these too were removed one by one, it wouldn't have mattered. But now, taking them out, the specialist still cannot find me. He breaks the bones to find bone marrow. But "I" am missing. Suddenly somebody realizes that during this process of anatomy, where I was under an imaginary anaesthesia, they couldn't find "me". Where did I go? "I" was nowhere to be found in the body….

Putting the anatomy together, we discover that we have a physical body that has several layers, from skin to bone marrow. We also have several organs of action and other vital organs that keep our body working. We have 5 senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch; and 5 organs of action that help us walk, grasp, talk, excrete and reproduce. We have a heart that pumps blood and supplies oxygen and it seems that the body has breath that does far more. It causes circulation, digestion and excretion, keeping the body in a working condition. There is no doubt, that the body has all these parts, and together this makes the body. But that is my body. It is not me.

After the anatomy, can we put the body back together, fit back the organs, the muscles, and the blood and stitch it back with the skin? Just like we can strip open an

automobile or aeroplane and reassemble it, we cannot do it with the body, because somewhere in the process, the "me" that was inside seems to have disappeared and is lost. As long I was there, this body could walk, talk, move and do things, even procreate to create a new life. But now the very life that was inside is missing. In trying to find "me" inside the body, there are two realizations: (1) I am not the body; and (2) The "me" that was inside is gone forever.

The analysis of the gross body makes us realize that it is made up of the five gross elements that eventually cease to exist. The air inside the body that escapes and merges with the atmosphere, the water that evaporates, the fire or heat that is in the body remains no more and the body turns cold, the space the body occupies starts to shrink and finally what is left is just ash or mud. Somewhere in the body, possibly in the brain, there was a mind, but we can't find it as we do the anatomy. It doesn't seem to be part of the physical body because we have kept every molecule of the body on the table and we are unable to find the mind. It seems to have disappeared. Therefore, the logical conclusion, since both "me" and the mind have disappeared, is that I could be the mind. Let's try to find out.

“I watch my body.
I watch my mind.
But who I am,
I cannot find.”

4

Am I the Mind? – An Analysis!

In the process of finding me and doing an anatomy of the body, what came out very clearly is that I am not the body. The body lies in front, but the experimenters couldn't find me. Not only did they lose "me", they also lost the "mind", and have now concluded that "I" could be the mind.

All along, when I am alive, I think I am the body. I think I am the mind or a complex that includes body and mind. I relate my existence to the mind or to a subtle body as it is called. What is this subtle body? It is that part of me that is not gross or physical. The subtle me consists of a mind, an intellect, a memory and an ego. I seem to be this subtle body that seems to be living in the physical body, hidden somewhere in the physical body that the scientists are not able to find. By now, not only am I sure that I am not my house, my car and my clothes, I am also sure that I am not my body. I have a body, but that is not me.

I am the one who exists inside the body. Even the brilliant biologist could not find me, but I know that I exist. I feel happy and sad. I experience worry and tranquillity. I doubt and then I have faith. I live with hope, but also despair. I live with pride and sometimes I am ashamed. I go through cycles of cheerfulness and depression. I love, but I also hate. I am the one who feels these emotions. It is "me".

I also think, sometimes, up to 50 thoughts a minute. One moment, I am thinking what I should eat and the next moment, how much money I have in my pocket. My mind then jumps to the money my friend owes me, even as it worries about the serious illness of my wife. My wife was in Hong Kong, but was flying to the US to meet her parents and together they were going for a holiday to Hawaii, and finally, we are all supposed to meet up in Hong Kong. But suddenly, my mind comes back from the world tour to a stomach that is hungry. I remember that I like some chilli in my sandwich and I order my food. I also recall that I have to call the travel agent to book my tickets. I forget the flight number, and I am searching my brains to remember the details. Of course, we will be 7 in all: my wife Radha, my son Rajesh, my mother-in-law Sita and my father-in-law Gopal. But I forget the names of my wife's cousins. What has happened to my memory?

My intellect is the “King”. I just open my mobile phone and search for the names of her cousins. Oh! Yes, Bindia and Mohan. But then I decide that I don't want to invest my money and time in going to Hong Kong with them. I choose to cancel my tickets that were provisionally booked and proceed to a peaceful vacation to the Maldives. After all, I want to be happy, and I can choose as I feel.

As I analyse, I seem to be this ego, along with a thinking mind and a memory that remembers and recalls, and an intellect that discriminates and decides, and I do as I feel. But just a minute! Am I the mind, the memory and the intellect or do I have these three subtle faculties? Let's analyse.

I know I have a mind. I can see it wandering as it thinks. I also experience the mind when the body sleeps. While the body is unconscious, my mind stays awake and in moments travels around the globe as it dreams. I know I am not the mind. I know my mind dreams, but these beautiful or frightful dreams are a faculty of my mind. They are not me.

Am I the Mind that Dreams?

Dreams are so real. In a dream, we can actually see things happening. We are talking to people, we are moving and we are doing things. It's "LIVE" and happening and we experience so many things. But it is not real. How does this happen? How does the mind imagine things in a dream that actually never happen in reality?

In a dream, I think it is me – absolutely me and it is 'I' who experience everything – first hand. I can feel everything happening in the dream. When I wake up, I realize

without doubt that it was just a dream. Whatever I saw, I dreamt, I felt, was not real. I experienced it, but it was not happening to me. It was just my mind dreaming. I clearly realize that I did not dream. My mind was dreaming and I am not the mind but I experience the dreams of the mind, just as I am not the body, but I can experience actions of the body when awake.

"Who am I?" asked the King

A king who was in quest of the truth once woke up from a dream and asked the question – "Who am I – a king or a beggar? The king had just experienced a nightmare. He was defeated in war and after being taken captive, was left on the streets of a new town to beg for his existence. He didn't know the language and as a stranger, hungry, thirsty and tired, he was begging for food. He stood in a line where free food was being distributed. After a long wait, when he reached the counter, the food was over. He begged for something and finally, he was given a bowl of the leftover soup. As he was about to drink from the bowl, a thirsty bird swooped at the bowl and it fell down. In agony and utter helplessness, the king started screaming – "I am dying! I will die!"

At this point, he woke up in his royal kingdom, fanned by the queen and he questioned, "Am a beggar or a king? Am

I a king dreaming that I was a beggar or am I a beggar dreaming that I am a king?" While the queen and all his ministers tried to convince him that he was, in fact, a king who had a bad dream, he refused to accept it. All the work in his kingdom came to a halt because the king was caught in this dilemma – "Am I a king or a beggar?" It was only after a realized saint happened to meet the king that he realized the truth. Neither am I the king who was dreaming that I am a beggar, nor am I a beggar dreaming that I am a king. The king realized that just like the dream of the beggar was unreal, even his experiences as a king were not permanent. Both were experiences; both were transitory. He was not the king nor the beggar, but the one who experienced the waking and the dreaming states of the king and beggar.

What else Makes the Mind?

The memory is often thought to be part of the mind, but it seems to be another faculty of the subtle body. It has two important functions. It remembers what I experience and it can recall everything that it records. But am I the memory? I have a memory, but this memory is not me. It can only come alive with me, just like the mind cannot exist without me. Both the mind and the memory are not me, but are mine.

Finally, what about the intellect? It is that domain that

discriminates. When "I" the ego want to choose, I use this third faculty of the subtle body, my most treasured weapon, to analyze and decide what I want to do.

On further analysis, I am flabbergasted because while I have realized I am not the physical body, as the anatomy proved, I start to wonder – "How can I be the mind, the memory and the intellect when they don't exist as the body is dissected to find me?" In fact the 'I' who thinks I have a gross body and I have a subtle body, is itself an illusion. It brings me back to the original question – "Who am I?" If I am not the body and the mind, then who am I?

I think… Therefore I am

The ancient world contemplated on the Latin philosophical proposition of cogito ergo sum by Rene Descartes, which translates into "I think, therefore I am". They rationalized that existence was based on the fact that we human beings were thinkers. Because we think, we exist. If we do not think – like when we are dead – then we don't exist!

This proposition was confronted by another proposition – I am, therefore I think. Here, the argument is – how can I think if I don't exist. It is because I exist that I think.

In the first case, the thought is "Because I think, I exist".

And in the second case, the thought is "Because I exist, I think". In reality, thinking and existing go hand in hand. If we exist, we think. If we think, we exist. Therefore, there should be no argument on the above. What is more important is to find out who thinks and who exists. We don't bother to find that out! The debate should not be whether I exist because I think or I think because I exist. The debate should be "Who exists?" This quest will help us realize who we are. We have a mind that thinks and discriminates. But are we the mind? Or do we have a mind?

When we did an anatomy of the body, we found there was no mind. So how can we be the mind that doesn't exist? We feel we have a mind. We are the ones who experience the presence of a mind that thinks, dreams, remembers, discriminates and feels. Definitely, our body has a subtle faculty that performs these functions as long as we are alive, but we are neither the gross body nor the subtle body in the final analysis.

Are you confused? Please don't be! You will surely solve the mystery. I consider it to be the world's greatest mystery – the search for "me". Since we didn't find it in the anatomy of the body nor in the analysis of the mind, let us try to find "me" when death happens.

“My ego is my identity.
My ego is not 'me'.
Because I live in ignorance,
who I am I cannot see.”

5

At Death…, What Becomes of Me?

What is death? It is that moment when there is no breath in our body. The Life Energy departs and the body dies. We can clearly see that the person who was alive is no more in the body. We even say that this is the dead body of the person and the person has passed away, moved on or departed.

On a further analysis, what happens at death? The body remains intact. The eyes, the nose, the ears, the heart, the lung, the kidneys, the head, the hands and the legs seem to be intact. But something is missing. The life that was there – the person itself – seems to be missing.

The question that faces us is – "If this is the dead body of the person who was alive, and if the person who died is not this body, then who and where is the person?" At death, if we can clearly understand that we are not the body that we were, but rather the ones who were alive in the body, then all throughout the life, the body is only an external case or habitat in which we exist.

Death is the most appropriate moment to introspect and contemplate on this. It becomes absolutely clear that we are not the body. The question that faces us is – "Who are we?" Are we the subtle body that has departed causing death; the mind, the memory and the ego that all along

seemed to exist, but could not be physically touched and felt; or are we that Life Energy that exists within, which caused death as it departed?

Many theologies and philosophies that believe in the concept of rebirth based on the Law of Karma believe that we are the mind that is reborn. It is the mind that drives the body to act. It is the mind that ultimately feels pleasure and pain. Therefore, while the body dies, the mind departs and is reborn, on the basis of its past actions, and thereafter, it enjoys or suffers a next life in a new body as per its own actions. While there are sufficient incidents to prove this to be true, it is still a topic of controversy as there is no empirical proof of rebirth. While some people believe we are the mind that departs at death, the analysis of the mind clearly proves that we are the ones who have a mind. We experience the mind, but we are not the mind.

There is no doubt that we are not the body, the body dies. There is no proof that we are the mind that departs when the body dies. Even if this is accepted as a doctrine of several religions, the very same religions finally endorse the existence of the mind to be an illusion. This puts to rest the question whether we are the mind. Therefore, now we are clear of what we are not.

As we meditate on death and realize that we are not the body, a detailed anatomy proved to us that we have a body, but we are not the body. As we contemplate that we are not the mind, a detailed analysis convinced us that we have a mind, but we are not the mind. Therefore, the only inference that seems logical is that we are the life energy that departs at death.

So who are we? We are somebody, aren't we? Of course! We are the ones who experience the body and mind. We are the ones who experience life and death. We are never born, and we never die. Only our body and mind go through these experiences. Who are we?

We are the life energy. We are that energy that comes alive at birth and departs at death. We are just like electricity that gives light to a bulb. We give life to a body and mind and energize it during its human experience on earth. There is no proof as to where we – the Energy – come from at birth and where we – the Life Energy – go at death. But we know when the Life Energy departs. It is at that moment of death that the Life Energy inside us leaves the body.

While we are absolutely clear about when we leave the body, there is a debate about when we arrive into the body.

Some people believe that the Life Energy is sparked when the sperm and the ovum fertilize to create the first cell that is the zygote. Others believe that the life enters during the process of the zygote becoming an embryo. There are still others who believe that the Life Energy enters at the time when physical birth takes place on earth. While there is a difference of opinion as to when exactly the Life Energy enters a baby, universally, there is no doubt that a Life Energy does enter somewhere between fertilization and birth, just as there is no doubt that this Life Energy leaves at death.

It seems now beyond doubt that we are not the body that we thought we were, we are not the mind that we imagined ourselves to be. We are the Life Energy that arrives at birth and departs at death. There seems to be no other conclusion regarding who we can be. If you are still not convinced that you are the Life Energy that lives in a body-mind complex, science will put your doubts to rest.

"I am the energy
that gives breath.
Without me, there is death."

6

What Does Science Say About Me?

Recently, some scientists were performing an experiment. They examined a human cell under a microscope and found it to be made up of molecules floating in an ocean of water. Molecules are not the smallest unit of matter in our body. Molecules consist of atoms, which when further broken down reveal the presence of protons, neutrons and electrons. In fact, the tiniest sub-atomic particles in the body are called quarks. Today, the quarks seem to be the elementary particle and fundamental constituent of matter, as known to science.

As the scientists continued their experiment under the most sophisticated microscope to find the smallest particle, they were flabbergasted to notice that the tiny particle under examination suddenly disappeared. As they stood appalled and were trying to understand the phenomenon, they were overjoyed and also surprised to find that the tiny particle reappeared under their sophisticated equipment.

After much deliberation, the scientist documented their research as the discovery of a new scientific truth. They termed it as “Wave–Particle Duality”. According to this discovery, the smallest particle of matter transforms into energy as it disappears from being a physical substance. The duality permits the fragment of matter to reappear

from being energy into being the tiny particle again. This disappearance and reappearance prompted the scientist to call it "Wave–Particle Duality", by which they mean that there is duality between a particle and a wave. A particle of matter can transform into a wave and re-transform back into a particle, as proved by their experiment conducted in the laboratory. For those who needed further explanation, scientists explained that Wave–Particle Duality is a discovery that goes back to the scientific equation $E = mc^2$. Long ago, Einstein had proved through this equation and scientific law that energy can neither be created nor destroyed – it can only be transformed from one form to another. The Wave–Particle Duality was nothing but a transformation of matter to energy waves. We are quite familiar with photons that carry light and other waves that carry sound and have no physical form. These are energy waves. Quantum physics today believes that "particle" and "wave" can no longer exist as different entities as they seem to exchange their properties from one to another. This dual nature, where matter becomes energy is a profound scientific discovery that goes on to justify the statement that we human beings that appear to be a solid mass of matter are not matter in reality. We are trillions and trillions of energy particles that when put together appear to be the atoms, molecules and the cells, which we are finally made up of.

This entire capsule of science and its discovery endorse a simple thing. We are not the body; we are not the mind. We are the energy that our entire body is made up of. The Life Energy that we are is so designed that it appears in every cell of our body.

The Wave–Particle Duality has a two-sided nature, where particles behave like waves and waves behave like particles. This is no more a mystery! In fact, recently, the scientific world invested money for one of the world's most expensive experiments to understand how these subatomic particles were behaving. These particles were converting into energy, which was then reconverting into matter.

Over the centuries, the biggest difference between science and spirituality was that spirituality thought of human existence as something spiritual rather than physical. Science with its intellectual claims based on physics, chemistry and biology reached its ultimate conclusion, agreeing with spirituality that man who was all along considered to be a physical being is actually not so. When the same man is scientifically torn apart into cells and further examined under sophisticated instruments, the tiny particles as defined by physics have been scientifically proved to be nothing but energy. This is nothing new to

spirituality. From time immemorial, spirituality has only said this – "We are not physical matter. We are energy". Today science and spirituality seem to have complete synergy in their beliefs that we are ENERGY!

"We are not what we seem to be. The truth is we are ENERGY."

7

Am I Consciousness?

If I am not the body, and I am not the mind, then what am I? Both science and spirituality have concluded that I am energy. But for me to believe that I am energy - it is not easy. How do I comprehend energy?

For me to define electricity is so difficult without the help of a gadget or instrument like a bulb. With the help of a bulb, I can easily understand what electricity is, as it flows through a filament to give light. When I switch off the power, the bulb doesn't glow. We human beings see it in our everyday life. Power flows into our mobile phones to charge them, gives life to our television screens, and also powers our air conditioning, our music and practically everything else in our life today. While we understand energy that comes from electricity, it is strange that we don't understand the energy that comes into a human body at birth and departs at death. While we are well aware of it, we have not invested time in spiritual experiments as we have on scientific ones.

To explore energy in a human body, let us dwell a little on our consciousness. The energy in us is alive, but we go through phases of being conscious and unconscious. When we are conscious, our physical body is active, just as our subtle body or mind is also active. The energy in us makes us walk, talk and move. When the body goes to

sleep, we lose consciousness, but our mind is still energized. Therefore, the mind subconsciously continues its existence in dreams.

My body may be asleep, but my mind becomes a king and is living in a palace, enjoying the royal experiences, although it is just a dream. The next moment, my mind may be suffering a deadly disease or extreme poverty in a nightmare. I only realize this when I regain consciousness. Thank God, I say, it was only a dream! We human beings go through these waves of consciousness every day as the waker and as the dreamer. If we further analyse "Who are we?"– Are we the ones who are consciously awake or are we the ones who are subconsciously dreaming? We will realize we are neither. We are the ones who experience the waking consciousness, just as we are the one who experience the dreaming subconsciousness. In fact we also experience a third state of deep sleep, when both body and mind are at rest. There is complete stillness. But we are conscious of this too. That is why when we wake up after a deep sleep, where we enjoyed stress free bliss and peace, we say "I slept like a log". Who experienced that? It is "me", the consciousness that also experienced what I did when I was awake and what I dreamt when I was asleep. Am I that consciousness?

When we talk of consciousness, we seem to understand it so easily. But somehow we don't understand it in the real sense. If you are conscious, you can listen to me, just as I can talk to you if I am conscious. We also understand that the body doesn't forget to breathe when we sleep as our subconscious never stops. Man has not thought further. If we go a little deeper, we realize that we are the consciousness that departs at death. We are no more. Unlike at sleep, where we experience a different state of consciousness, when "I" die, the "me"– that is not the body and mind, but pure energy – leaves the body permanently. I can never regain consciousness because I am no more alive in the body.

While science has gone up to the level of discovering the God particle, we have not been able to comprehend God and God energy. This is mainly because the term "God" has been misunderstood and misused. God is nothing but a Power – a Power that is responsible for the Universe and a Power that is beyond human comprehension. But a Power exists! It is this very Power that pervades every cell of our body. It is this Power that creates consciousness. We understand we are consciousness that arrives at birth and departs at death. We realize that we are that consciousness that experiences waking, dreaming and sleeping, but we don't realize that we are not this body. It is only a reflected

consciousness and not our real consciousness.

Suppose you are looking at a mirror and you see a perfect image of yourself. Do you think that the mirror is you? Of course not! You know the difference between you and your reflection in the mirror. Just because the mirror is dirty, will you look at the mirror and say your face is dirty? You will not say so because you are very much aware that it is only your reflection that seems dirty since the mirror is dirty.

Our mind itself is the cause of our ignorance. It does not permit us to realize the truth due to its volatile behaviour. A normal mind can think over 50 thoughts a minute. Each of these thoughts is like a pebble thrown in a still pond of water. Each pebble creates a ripple. Our normal agitated mind creates innumerable ripples with the constant thoughts it produces, making the reflection of our real consciousness distorted. Imagine there was a large bucket of water that was still. In this bucket, we saw the reflection of the sun. What would we see? We would see a perfect image of the sun, just as if the sun was emerging from that bucket of water. The same water as it becomes waves of the ocean fails to reflect a perfect image of the sun. That does not deny the existence of the sun. But like a dusty mirror, we are unable to capture the image of the true consciousness that we are.

We human beings are energy, pure consciousness that appears in a human body just like light appears in a bulb, but somehow while we understand how electricity flows into a bulb, we are unable to understand that we are the consciousness that appears in the human body and not the body itself. The body is just a reflection of our true energy. A still mind that is absolutely calm can stop and reflect this truth, but an agitated mind that behaves likes waves with turbulent thoughts can't see the reflection of our true consciousness.

It is strange that we human beings look at a gold ring, a necklace, and a bangle and think that there is gold in these ornaments. The truth is there is no gold in the ornaments. The ornaments are gold itself. If I were to tell you to take out the gold from the ring and give me the ring, could you do it? You would say it is not possible because if I take out all the gold from the ring as I melt it, there is no ring left at all! It only appeared as a gold ring, just as the bangle and the necklace appear. Our mind doesn't let us realize the truth that there is no bangle, ring or necklace. It is all gold that appears in all these different forms with different names.

Gold is the cause. The ring, the necklace and the bangle are effects of the cause. The law of causation will help us

realize that we are consciousness. If we understand the 3 tenets of the law.

1. There cannot be an effect without a cause

2. An effect is nothing but the cause in a different form

3. If you remove the cause from the effect, nothing remains

Putting the law of causation to test, we can clearly understand that gold is the cause; the ring, the necklace and the bangle are effects. They are nothing but different forms of gold. If you remove the gold, nothing remains.

Mud is the cause. The mud pot, the mud plate and the mud statue are effects. The pot, plate and statue are nothing but mud. If you remove mud, what remains?

Water is the cause. The wave, the bubbles, the spray are the effects we see in the ocean. While these may appear different, they are all caused by the water of the ocean. If we remove the water, there will be no wave, no bubbles and no spray.

We human beings are effects. We appear to be you and me, as we live. The cause of you and me is energy - the energy that gives us life and consciousness. When the energy that

is you and me departs, what remains? Nothing! We cease to exist. What appears as us soon deteriorates, decays and disappears.

We are the energy consciousness that appears as the body just as gold appears as the ring and mud appears as the statue. Somehow, we human beings have discovered everything, but we have not been able to discover a simple thing – "We are 'Energy'". We are not the 'I' – the body, mind and ego - that we always thought we were.

"We may think it is a necklace,
a bangle or a ring.
No! It's not –
there is gold in everything!"

8

Self-Realization

So who am I? By now, I know that I am not the "I" that I always thought I was. I know that I am not the name that I always introduced myself as – that is just my identity. I may look and feel like that person in the physical body, but in reality, am I the physical form? It is just like a bangle that says "I am a bangle", when in reality, it is nothing but gold. This body starts as a zygote – a single cell. It develops as an embryo and it is born as a baby without a name. Then, it is given a name, which I am not, but by which I am called and which I start thinking I am. This body keeps changing. First, people call me baby, then master, and then mister as I grow, but I know that I don't grow; only my body grows. I don't change. From the time I am conscious of my existence to the time I am alive, I am that unchanging energy, that Consciousness that pervades every cell of my body. I realize that my body has gross and subtle aspects, but I am neither. Who am I?

For sure, I am not my body and not my mind, just like I am sure that I am not my house, my table, my chair or my car. I seem to have all of these as I live, just as I have dozens of garments that I wear. I am not what I wear, but rather I am the one who wears all this.

I am. Of course I am. How can you and I say we don't exist? We exist, no doubt and we know we do. But unfortunately,

we don't know who we are. We live and die in ignorance, without realizing the truth.

Most of humanity live and die in ignorance. In fact, it is said that less than 1% of humanity seek the truth. Very few ask questions like – who am I, where did I come from and where will I go? Rest of humanity just zoom from womb to tomb. Most people have no time to ask the question, who am I? They live and die without realizing – "I am not 'I'".

Self-realization is the realization of the truth. It is discovery of the self – of me. It is about understanding who I am. In fact, it is beyond understanding because understanding is of the mind, and the mind opposes the realization of the truth. The mind doesn't want us to realize the truth, because on realization, the mind ceases to exist. The fact is that the mind is the enemy of self-realization

I am not "You". I am "Me"!

Our ego is very intelligent. It clearly distinguishes between you and me. It knows the difference between your body and my body. It identifies me as John and you as Robert. The ego knows that I am not "you", I am "me".

What the ego doesn't realize is that I am not even "me". I

am "HE". I am not the Mind and Ego that I think I am. Humanity thinks that we are M+E, Mind + Ego, the ego being the identity or the body. The whole world thinks I am "me". Very few people realize that I am not me. I am HE – the Holistic Energy. I am energy that manifests as ME – as the Mind and ego. But in reality, just like I am not "you" and I know it, I don't realize that I am not me. Only when I realize that I am HE (Holistic Energy), I realize that I am not ME (Mind + Ego).

Why is it so easy to know I am not "you" and so difficult to realize I am not "me"? This is because ME stops me from realizing the truth. Once I realize I am not ME (mind and ego), the mind and ego ceases to exist. Therefore, the mind and ego resist the realization. The mind stops us from contemplation on the truth through two powers it possesses – one power that conceals and another power that projects. The mind first conceals the truth. It stops us from realizing we are the energy. Then the mind projects the illusion that makes us feel that we are this body and mind. It clearly defines me as someone different from you and different from this world of objects and things. The mind continues to fool us till death and we live and die, knowing the difference between you and me, but not realizing that I am not I. It doesn't let us go on a quest to search for the answer – "Who am I?"

Therefore, we cannot understand who we are. We have to realize this. Self-realization is in the domain of consciousness, the energy that we are. When our energy consciousness realizes that we are not the body and not the mind, it uses the faculty of the intellect to discriminate from who we are not. It is the intellect that helps us realize that we are not we what we seem to be. We are not "I", the identity of the body. We are not ME – the mind and ego. We are HE – the Holistic Energy that is all-pervading.

We are the Energy, nothing but the pure energy. We are the life energy that is called by different names – soul, *Chi, Prana, Atman.* Unfortunately, these names sometimes can be misleading as they can be defined and interpreted differently. But we are nothing but that energy that creates life. It is not difficult to realize LIFE. Aren't you able to differentiate between from a rose that has life and a plastic rose? You know the difference between a soft toy and your pet dog. You also know the difference between a fish that is alive in water and dead on a plate. What is missing? The Life Energy – the Energy that is the real you and me.

Some people question – "Where is the energy? We can't see it!" It is like asking where is the electricity in the bulb? It is very simple. Put your hand inside the bulb, and you will know. We human beings are intelligent enough to

understand life energy and we are the only ones blessed to realize the truth of who we are.

It starts from asking the question – "Who am I?" Then, we eliminate who I am not. It leads to realizing that I am not 'I' that I always thought I was. When we transcend the ego, mind and body, we realize the truth.

Somebody asked me the question – if I was energy, then where do I go after death? I took a balloon. It was dead and lifeless. I blew air into it. Suddenly it was full of life as it bounced and tossed. I then untied the balloon and let the air out, and I asked him – "Where has the air inside the balloon escaped to?" He replied that the air in the balloon has merged with the air that is everywhere. That is exactly what happens when the energy inside us departs. That energy is everywhere – consciousness is not just inside us, but around us, above us and under us. Unfortunately we think that consciousness is within us. We don't realize rather that we are in consciousness. Only when we realize the truth will we be able to understand this.

The journey of self-realization can be completed in a moment by some, and it may take decades for others. It is not a gift to all of humanity. Only those few seekers who have the grace of the creator embark on the journey of self-

realization and realize the truth. They discover who they are not and thereafter realize who they truly are.

Self-realization is the beginning of a new journey, a journey that starts at self-realization and goes beyond. But you cannot go beyond until you ask the question – who am I and realize that I am not "I".

Most people live and die thinking that the goal of life is to be happy. Sure, it's great to be happy but what is ultimate happiness? Ultimate happiness comes from liberation. It comes from self-realization that we are not the body and mind. We continue to live in prisons of misery and sorrow, because we don't pursue the ultimate goal of life.

"The eyes see the world,
the mind sees the eyes.
But 'I' am the one
who watches them both.
'I' am the one behind."

9

What is my Ultimate Goal?

If we look around, different people have different goals. Some people just want to be rich, others are trying to be powerful, and still others want contentment and fulfilment. If we look deeper, people pursue different things to ultimately get to destination happiness. 80% of the world are trying to climb the first peak of Achievement, while the rest are trying to move further towards the second peak of Fulfilment. The achiever may want to excel in sports, politics or business, amongst the various other traits that are mushrooming in the world today. The ones who are content and fulfilled are trying to stop from running the rat race. For them, happiness doesn't come from achieving more, but rather from desiring less. The former who are climbing the first peak of happiness depend on pleasure to give them happiness and the latter believe that peace is the foundation of happiness. 99% of humanity fall under these two categories. Does it mean that the remaining 1% doesn't seek happiness? Of course not! Everybody alive on Earth seeks happiness. The 1% whose happiness doesn't depend on pleasure from achievement or peace from fulfilment seek happiness that comes from finding the true purpose of life. This tiny minority goes on a quest, on a search, but ultimately even they want happiness.

Therefore, what is wrong in saying that the goal of

humanity is happiness? There is nothing wrong, except that ultimate happiness is neither on the first peak of Achievement nor on the second peak of Fulfilment. We are unfortunately looking for it in the wrong place.

There was an old woman who was searching for something she had dropped outside her house. The neighbours, out of concern and compassion, came forward to help her find what she had lost. Everybody was looking around, till a smart neighbour asked her the question – "Are you sure you know where you dropped it?" She replied, "Of course, I do. I dropped it inside my house." The neighbour strangely questioned her, "Then why are you looking for it outside your house?" to which she replied, "There is no light inside my house, so I am searching outside."

Aren't most of us like this old lady? We seek for happiness in the wrong places and our entire life is consumed in the pursuit of happiness. We seek happiness from pleasures and peace but ultimate happiness comes from the realization of who we truly are.

The musk deer, known for the exotic fragrance it possesses, is said to roam in the forest of the Himalayas. Throughout its life, it keeps searching for the musk. It

becomes so passionate and obsessed with the fragrance of the musk, that it goes mad searching for it in circles. It doesn't realize that the fragrance of the musk is coming from its own navel where the musk exists. In its frenzy to find the musk, it falls from the cliffs only for hunters to cut open its belly, and take out the musk that is very much inside it. All through life, we like the musk deer are searching for happiness, not realizing that happiness is within us. We are the very happiness that we are seeking!

While 1% of humanity goes on a Quest, a Search within, trying to find a purpose, and realize the truth, all are not fortunate enough to find this purpose and meaning. A very small fraction of the seekers attain self-realization. They realize that they are neither the body that will die nor the mind that doesn't exist. They ultimately realize that they are the Divine Energy or Consciousness that gives them life.

While this realization leads to liberation, it inadvertently gives ultimate joy, peace and bliss and frees those who are realized from the prisons of misery and sorry as we escape from the darkness of the ignorance we live in.

Probably, less than 0.00001% of humanity attain self-realization and ultimate, eternal, everlasting joy, bliss,

peace and happiness with it. These fortunate souls escape from the cycle of death and rebirth. They are liberated from the body and the myth that they are the mind that is reborn based on their past actions.

This is the ultimate goal of life. The world calls it Enlightenment or Salvation. The Hindus call it *Moksh*; the Buddhist call it *Nirvana*. Whatever you may call it, the ultimate goal of life is liberation from misery and suffering. We human beings suffer as we live and die because we think we are the body and mind. Of course, we experience happiness while we are alive, but none of us can escape from suffering. Such is the world.

I am a Prisoner – I must be Liberated

Why is it that you can make out the difference between you and me? It may sound silly, but you would say, "I know what is you and what is me". But how do you know? You know it because you are imprisoned in a body controlled by an ego and mind that makes you believe that this is me. We don't realize the truth that we are imprisoned in a body. We live and die with ignorance in this body – thinking this is me.

The goal of life is to be liberated from this body while alive.

Death automatically liberates us from this body, but probably only to be imprisoned again in another body. This is because we think we are the mind that escapes at death only to face the consequences, good or bad of our previous existence. We have to manifest in another body for the cycle to continue. There is no real proof of this, but through inference, we believe in reincarnation. The goal, however, is to escape from this suffering of death again and again. When we realize that the body becomes dust at death, and the mind doesn't exist, we realize we are energy Consciousness and we become free from the prison of this body-mind complex while alive. Then, we realize there is no difference between you and me. Both are energy.

The moment we are free and liberated, our life is transformed. We no more consider ourselves to be the body-mind complex. We realize we have a body, and we have a mind. But this is not me. We realize that the ego is nothing but ignorance that envelops the truth in darkness. Realization switches on the light to reveal the truth.

Two men were fighting. As they counted the number of black spots on the snake that was lying in the bushes, they started silently whispering to each other – one saying that the snake had 46 spots, while the other said that there were 48 spots. This became a silent argument till another friend

searching for them with a torchlight happened to appear at the scene and the torchlight fell on the snake. The argument ended because both the friends realized that the snake, which was the topic of their argument, was in fact a rope and not a snake. The truth was revealed.

Unfortunately, because we live in darkness, we are ignorant about the truth. We continue to be prisoners in a body and mind, which we are not, but we imagine ourselves to be. Thus we suffer as the body and as the mind, again and again, because we do not realize the truth of who we truly are.

As we age, we get into a cage of fear and worry. We fear death and worry about the loss of all that is ours. We also fear the loss of relationships that we enjoy. Finally we fear the unknown that lies beyond death. We see people live and die, and we realize that death is certain. But because we don't realize the truth, we live as a body and mind to suffer and die. It is common for old age to be accompanied with disease and decay, which only makes the fear even more dreadful.

The ultimate goal of life is to realize the truth. We should realize we are not the body that suffers and dies. We should realize that we are not the mind that has to be

reborn again and again. We are energy: the energy that gives Consciousness to the body and mind while it experiences life on Earth. This is self-realization. The ultimate goal is self-realization because realization of the truth liberates us from the prisons of misery and sorrow that are experienced being the ego, mind and body, which we are not.

Once you realize you are not who you think you are, you also realize that you are not the one who suffers.

"We are prisoners of this body.
We are prisoners of this mind.
Who are we? On realization,
we will find!"

10

You Don't Have to Suffer!

Several centuries ago, there was a Hindu prince by the name Siddhartha Gautama. He was the son of a wealthy king and had everything one could dream of. He married a very beautiful princess and they were blessed with a lovely son. The prince was protected from experiencing suffering as there was a prophecy. It was said that either he would become the king of kings or greatest amongst the spiritual saints.

His father, the king, could not stop the young prince from experiencing death of a bird that fell from the skies. The prince also happened to see some people growing old and dying. This was despite the fact that his father had even developed a new city, where the sick, the suffering and the aged were forcibly shifted to.

The prince went on to become the Buddha, the awakened one and so came about Buddhism. He proclaimed the 4 noble truths: In essence, the world is full of suffering. Desire is the primary cause of suffering. The suffering could be ended through realization of the truth. For this, one has to follow a path, which is referred to as the 8-fold path. Ultimately, the 4 noble truths and the 8-fold path would lead to *Nirvana* or Enlightenment, and one would experience ultimate joy and peace through the liberation from misery and sorrow.

The Buddha called it Nirvana, the saints and sages who were his mentors called it Moksh, and different people around the world term this liberation differently as Salvation or Enlightenment.

What is this liberation all about? In simple words, it advocates the simple fact – YOU DON'T HAVE TO SUFFER!

Who suffers? It is our body who suffers – isn't it? Whether we suffer physical pain due to an accident, a disease or the failure of an organ of our body, it is the body that experiences pain.

Who else suffers? It is our mind that suffers. While the body may sense pain, the sensations of pain are felt by the mind. Modern science has discovered anaesthesia and it is administered locally or to the entire body. What does anaesthesia do? It cuts of the sensation of pain from reaching the brain. With this medical development, doctors and surgeons are able to perform complicated surgeries that would otherwise cause unbearable pain. In our simple day-to-day living, can we go through a root canal procedure in our tooth without cutting off the sensations in our jaw? Even the thought of it can kill someone.

Such is pain. But everybody, who is born and who dies, experiences physical pain of the body and emotional pain of the mind. The mind fears and this causes pain. It worries and suffers. Anger, revenge, hate, and jealousy are the other emotions that create turmoil in the mind and we suffer.

But it is true that you don't have to suffer. If you realize the truth, then you are liberated from the prisons of misery and sorrow. How is this possible? If you realize that I am not the "I" that I think I am, I am not the body, and I am not the mind, then you don't suffer; then you don't experience pain.

No doubt, the body will suffer and you will be impacted by that suffering. But if you are aware that you are not the body, then your body suffers; you don't. If you realize that you are not the mind, the mind will continue to suffer and experience pain and you too will experience the pain of the mind, but you will not suffer because you have realized you are not the mind. Eventually, the suffering reduces and becomes irrelevant.

Therefore, those who realize that they are not the body and they are not the mind don't have to suffer. More important than the day-to-day pain, the realization that they are not

the body and mind liberates them at death and they are not reborn in the world to suffer again and again. They achieve Nirvana, Moksh, Salvation, Enlightenment or Liberation, escaping from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Let GO of Misery!

Realization of the truth is a guaranteed method to eliminate misery completely. We suffer only because we don't realize that we are not the body, not the mind and not the ego. The desires of the ego, the worrying and wandering of the mind and the cravings of the sense organs of the body together create unfulfilled desires that make us miserable.

Every time there is an expectation that is not met, we human beings become unhappy. This misery can be eliminated completely by the realization that we are neither the ego, nor the body or mind. All desires, expectations and cravings will disappear. And along with them, misery will be eliminated completely.

I have experienced this myself. I have realized the truth that I am not the body, and I am not the mind. Before I finish, let me share my experiences that led me to the realization of the truth.

"What I see is not me.
I am the one who sees.
The Body may suffer,
or the Mind may suffer,
but that is not me!"

AFTERWORD – My Realization

I lived for 40 years as Ravi V. Melwani. Then I transformed my life and even changed my name from Mr. Melwani to RVM. In fact, I started working early at 16 years of age. I worked for 25 years, making money. I met with success after success, and my friends envied me because whatever I touched turned to gold. Like they say, I had been there and done it. Nothing escaped me. I revolutionized modern retailing in India through my stores, Kidskemp, Big Kidskemp and Kemp Fort. Like anybody else, the primary objective of my life was making money. With money and success, there was name and fame and I always misunderstood pleasure to be happiness.

When I was 30, during the peak of my career, I was inspired to make a difference. Instead of just making money, I also started doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. I found greater happiness in "Making a Difference". There was a tug of war in my life for 10 years, till it finally happened! I shut down my business, changed my name to RVM and transformed my life.

My mission of life was to make a difference, to touch, trigger and transform lives. I said goodbye to my business life and started living with contentment and fulfilment. I thought I was the happiest man on Earth. Every month, I

would go to a new country and discover God's beautiful world. For 8 years, I was absorbed in reducing pain and suffering, vibrating positive energy and making people believers through the humanitarian institutions – a free hospital and destitute homes, the RVM School of Inspiration and a temple of faith.

While I had evolved from the first peak of happiness, Achievement, to the second peak – Fulfilment, I didn't realize that I had reached a plateau of peace and joy. I was living as a philanthropist, philosopher, author, speaker, lyricist and singer, and I thought I was fulfilling my life purpose.

One day my mentor questioned me – "What is the purpose of your life? Why were you born?" These questions triggered further questions to which I didn't have answers: What happens after death? Does Reincarnation really happen? Of course, God exists – but what is God, where is God, who is God? Is the Law of Karma real - the Law of Action and Reaction, or the Law cause and effect? Will I be reborn? Does heaven and hell actually exist? Where is heaven and hell? What is the purpose of my life? What is the soul? What is Enlightenment?

At the age of 48, I started a new quest. I took all the possible books from my spiritual library, picked up every available

scripture as well as journals of all those masters that were known to the world. With my bag full of books, I headed into retreats of meditation and silence. Weeks and months passed by.

The first thing I dropped was religion. I discovered that religion was great, but it was only the kindergarten of spirituality. While I studied all the religions and while they all talk of God, they only teach us the basics of God. They propagate love, kindness, compassion, faith, hope, trust, brotherhood and prayer. Ultimately, most of the religions were propagating the same thing in different languages and styles. They help us start our journey of faith to believe that there is a power. Unfortunately, to explain God, religions use forms, names, and concepts that confuse us and make us go round in circles, making us believe in religion, but taking us away from the realization of the truth about God. It is like the man who was trying to explain to his little daughter what the moon was, as he pointed his finger to the sky. Instead of capturing the image of the moon as the beautiful ball, she always believed that the pointing finger was the moon.

My quest took me further. I went beyond religion to realize that there was a power, a power we call God. Unfortunately, while we are born with eyes to see, ears to

hear, and a mind to think, we human beings have not been blessed with a sense to comprehend God. But we have been blessed with an intellect that can discriminate between what is right and what is wrong. We can discover the truth as we realize what is myth and illusion.

How did it all start? How was this world created and by whom? I questioned. I was born from my parents, and my parents from their parents. But ultimately, how did life start? I came back to the eternal question – "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" The world goes round in circles, with the chicken saying, "Of course I came first, I delivered the egg." And the egg laughing and asking, "How can the chicken come without the egg?"

All these questions were on my study table as I moved from one retreat to another and studied all the theories. One of them was the amazing Big Bang Theory that talked about how everything started with a "bang" – the sun, the moon, the stars, the birds, the animals, the flowers. Anybody with a thinking mind can understand that even if this entire world came from a Big Bang, someone caused this bang. It is the work of a creative artist, a Power that is supreme, unknown to man. I read in awe how the evolution theory suggested that man evolved from an ape and I started looking at why monkeys were not evolving to become human today.

It was a very interesting research. Technology aided me as I could browse hundreds of websites in my search for the truth. I didn't stop with Jesus, Allah, Shiva and the Holy Trinity. I went deep into the source of Christianity and Islam. I read about Judaism and several ancient faiths. I dug into ancient civilizations – the Indus Valley, the Egyptian and Chinese settlements – trying to find the source of it all. Isn't it surprising that while we believe that the Earth is millions or even billions of years old, we have written documented proof of just a few thousand years? The entire world has, in fact, transformed in only the last 100 or 200 years.

I looked around in dismay as I found humanity paralysed with superstitions, rituals and beliefs that enveloped us in a blanket of ignorance. We were far from the truth. It took me several months to read hundreds of books. I became an expert in scanning books. I would pick up a book, and from its back page, preface and index, I could more or less know if it was relevant. Even if there was some good in it, I would start scanning through the pages. I realized that there was a pattern of spiritual intelligence around the world. Buddha called it *Nirvana*, the Hindu dharma called it *Moksh*, and Christianity called it Salvation. Together, the world titled the goal of life to be Enlightenment or Liberation.

I discovered that all these concepts were very similar, but had different names. It was the realization of the truth – self-realization – that ultimately led to God realization. It looked like I had answers to a few of my questions and my search got even more intense.

As I studied the Vedas and the Upanishads, and followed the doctrine of several saints – Adi Shankara of the 8th century, Ramana Maharshi, Swami Vivekananda, and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus, Guru Nanak and several others – I was led to the source. I was inspired to stop and to go within. My search started with questioning, went on to reflecting, took me into meditation and even got me into the scientific study of the truth.

What was my first "Aha" moment? It was the realization of what I am not. I am not "this" body. I am not "this" mind. I realized I was "that" – the Divine Energy. Some called it life, others called it *Prana*, some called it *Chi* or soul. But it all started with the question – "Who am I?" and the realization – "I am not what I think I am". I realized that this body will die. It is our home. It is not us. But our ego and mind get so attached to the body that we suffer. I realised that this was easy to know: "What I am not?" But the bigger question was – "If I am not this, then what am I?"

I read hundreds of books that spoke of how we are the soul – the Divine Energy. But I could not comprehend how we could be energy. This led me to my second "Aha" moment – that my mind was the enemy to my self-realization. I was clear by now that the goal of life was Enlightenment, Liberation, *Moksh* or Salvation. I was also clear that all these terms meant the same thing, but were just presented differently. It seemed that the puzzle I was trying to solve was falling into place. I could see half the picture, with a few more pieces in my hand. I realized that the subject under study could not be learned just by knowledge alone. It starts with knowledge, goes on to introspection and contemplation, and finally one needs to experience it. Even after this three-step method, you still need Divine Grace to get to the final truth. I prayed and I cried because my mind made me wander. The mind and ego together defeat the quest of a seeker, putting seekers through tough tests. After all, self-realization is not a game for the faint- hearted. But I was persistent. I never knew the meaning of defeat. Only this time, I replaced my arrogance with humility, my confidence with faith, my intelligence with hope, and my efforts with trust. I surrendered to the Supreme Divine as I continued my search.

If somebody asked me to prove that this mobile phone was mine, it was not difficult. I would use my fingerprint or

password to prove it. But if somebody asked me to prove that the Law of Gravity exists, I can't. It is only by inference that I can understand the law. When we throw something up, why does it not fly into the sky? It drops back on the Earth because of the gravitational pull. We understand and accept the law through inference.

There is no proof that God exists. But surely there is an intelligent power that created the earth – the mountains, and the trees, the rivers and the seas. It could not have just come into existence. Several natural laws led to my realization.

If you plant tomatoes, will you get mangoes? Of course not! We all have learnt that as you sow, so shall you reap. This leads us to another law – the Law of Karma or the Law of Action and Reaction. As I was spiritually evolving, realizing what I was not and realizing what I truly am, I dropped several myths and continued to question everything that came in front of me.

I studied science and was excited with the latest discoveries that are in sync with the ancient theory of $E = mc^2$. The famous equation of Einstein is significant because it talks about how matter and energy are related and can be converted from one to the other. What Einstein

had said decades ago that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, but can only be transformed from one form to another was now scientifically proved under the microscope on the basis of the new theory of Wave–Particle Duality. Scientists were flabbergasted to discover that matter is nothing but energy. Now, science believes that although we human beings look like what we are, we are potentially trillions of energy particles put together, appearing as you and me.

How can we be energy? I was still thinking as I continued my study. All along, science had opposed spirituality, but now it was endorsing it. It helped me in my study. On the spiritual front, I had done the anatomy of the body to realize I am not the body. I had done a detailed analysis of the mind, and I knew that I was not the mind. I had realized that we human beings experience 3 states of consciousness, but we are not the waker, the dreamer, or the sleeper. We are the "experiencer" or observer of the 3 states.

Every morning there was a train – the Morning Mail that passed by a railway station. In the afternoon, there was an Intercity Express that stopped at the station. In the night, there was the Super Fast Night Express that commenced its journey from the station. Someone asked the station

master, "Which of the three are you?" The station master was intelligent. In fact, he thought it was a foolish question. His answer was very simple – "I am not any of the three trains. I see the three trains pass by, but I am the station master."

This made me realize who we truly are. We are the fourth state of consciousness. The learning from this analogy is that we must realize and distance ourselves from the three states that keep coming and going. We are not these three states that come and go. We are the fourth state of Consciousness – the state that watches the other three states. We are not the body–mind–ego complex, not the waker, dreamer or sleeper. We are the Life Energy or Consciousness.

I realized I could not use the mind to realize the truth. I had to use the intellect to discriminate.

I learned that I should pass through one of the 4 doors to liberation – Discrimination, Dispassion, Discipline, and Desire .

If one wanted to realize that we are not the body, mind and ego, one must live with Discrimination, using one's intellect to discriminate what is real from what is false. One should live with Dispassion, not living with desire

and lust. One should live with Discipline – Discipline of the body, mind, cravings, living with Faith, Forbearance and Focus. And one must live with the Desire for Liberation and passion to realize the truth. If one's life rested on those four pillars, then one will pass through life and at the end, arrive at destination Liberation.

I also learnt the true meaning of Yoga. It meant union with God, and there were 4 ways to do it. People misunderstand the term Yoga and take it to be physical gymnastics. In reality, the word Yoga means Union – Union with the Power or God. There are four ways to unite with the Divine Power. They are – Action, Devotion, Meditation, and Education. If our action is in total surrender as if we are nothing, if our devotion is complete with complete faith and surrender, if our meditation makes us reduce the activity of the mind and go inwards, in silence, if our education is trying to make us go on a quest, to learn; these four methods of Union will together, either individually or jointly lead us to Union with the Divine Power.

Once a villager came to a town and he was shown a movie for the first time in his life. It was a movie about a battle – the sky was full of smoke and there were horses, elephants and soldiers everywhere on the screen. The friend of the

villager who brought him to the theatre in the town asked him, "What do you see on the screen?" To which he said, "I see horses." "What do you see behind the horses?" asked his friend. He replied, "I see elephants." "Now what do you see behind the elephants?" again his friend asked. "I see soldiers." His friend further inquired, "What do you see behind the soldiers?" He said, "I see smoke in the sky." "What do you see beyond that?" continued his friend. He said that he could not see anything beyond that. And his friend laughed because he was just fooling the villager. Suddenly, the movie stopped. The friend asked the villager, "What do you see now?" The latter said, "Well, I see nothing! I see a plain screen." And then his friend told him that the horses and elephants and the soldiers and the smoke in the sky were all projections. They were not real.

It is very funny, but sometimes we behave like the villager, who came to the city to see a movie. The villager did not realize that the movie was nothing but a projection. We human beings don't realize that everything we see is just a manifestation on Earth, the theatre of the Divine. Like in every movie, we too will experience "The End" – Death. But the end is not "The End"; it is just a bend to transcend. Birth tells us that death is not the end. It is like a sunset somewhere, only to be a sunrise somewhere else.

One day, on the 31st of August, 2014 – when I was on an Air France flight AF192 from Paris to Bangalore, I had my final "Aha" moment. My puzzle fell into place. I got answers to all the questions I was seeking. On that auspicious and very special day, I too found the truth - just like a stone cutter who keeps hitting at the rock finally finds it cracked into two pieces!

From the very next day – 1st of September 2014 – my life went through a second transformation. This time it was a metamorphosis – a complete, total and permanent change. Ravi Melwani who had transformed his life to RVM died. This person was no more because of the realization that I am not the body, not the mind. My realization was simple but absolute! I was not the body that looked like Ravi Melwani; I was not the mind that thought like RVM. I was the Energy that gave life to RVM. I was the Atman, the Soul, or the Power that was manifesting as RVM. Therefore, I was AiR – the Atman in RVM. I existed in the body and with the mind of RVM, but that was not me. My ego of RVM was transcended. I was no more RVM although I appeared in and as RVM. Without the body and mind of RVM, I would not be alive. It was my ignorance all these years to think that I was the body, mind and the ego of RVM. My realization started the beginning of a new journey – a journey of truth, eradicating ignorance that I

was this man who was called RVM. I realized that I existed in this body and mind to grow, learn, evolve, transcend and finally, to be liberated.

It took me 2 years to overcome my biggest enemy – my mind. The mind refused to believe what I had realized and I refused to give up the truth. There was a battle within me, a kind of tug of war. On one side, it was the mind that was controlling the five senses, just like a leash controls the five horses of a chariot. On the other side, it was my realized self with my intellect determined to be what I am and not continue to live as body and mind. If the intellect controlled the mind, then I would be in command of the 5 senses and win the battle within. The chariot of my life would gallop towards liberation. I realized that we were prisoners, spirits having a human experience in a prison of body and mind. Our goal was liberation, to escape from the ignorance and to be liberated from the sorrows of the ego, mind and body.

My realization was not a simple math of 2 + 2. Several beliefs put together in an effort that stemmed from a love of the Supreme Divine, were finally blessed by Divine Grace to make the realization of truth happen. It included a detailed study of death, and beyond. Rebirth and reincarnation were part of my study. But realization can't

be explained in words. That's why it is called realization and not knowledge. One may have all the knowledge of the truth, but may not realize the truth. Every realized being is different from another. No two realized souls are the same. Hundreds of analogies and stories added to my in-depth study of spirituality and took me to the edge of realization of the truth. I realized I am AiR – the Atman in Ravi. I have a body of Ravi V. Melwani that will age and die, just as RVM has a mind, memory, intellect and ego, but neither am I the body or the mind. I am nothing. I am just a spark of energy that comes from the Supreme Divine Energy. You and me – we both are manifestations of the Divine Power and so is everything else on Earth.

My realization can't be explained completely in a few pages, but for sure, this book – I Am Not I – is the effect of my realization of the truth, and it started with the question – "Who am I?" I believe that if we are sincere in our search and follow the methods prescribed, we can realize the truth, and we can be liberated from the prisons of misery and sorrow, but only if the Divine Grace is upon us.

In my search for answers, I often wondered why I am being encapsulated in a body and mind. Then, I realized that just like electricity needs a bulb to manifest itself, so

also, I need a body and mind to manifest the true self that I am. Without this instrument, how would I be able to realize who I am? If electricity existed without a bulb, a machine, or a gadget, it would probably go unnoticed to the common mind. That's why for centuries, hydropower and solar power existed, but were not discovered. I just realized the importance of the body and mind in the realization of the truth of who I am.

While we need a body and a mind to realize the truth, I learned that my realization went through 2 loops – each having 2 steps. The first loop was to realize "who I am not" and the second loop was to realize "who I am".

In the first loop, there was a 2-step challenge. In the first step, I had to realize I am not the body. To me that was not difficult. Observing death and meditating on the truth can easily bring about the realization through inference that we are not the body. In the second step, I had to realize that I am not the mind – that was the biggest challenge! This was because my mind refused to let me realize. Every time the knowledge that I was not the mind was crystalizing into realization, the mind would distract me from such contemplation because the mind knew that the moment this realization would happen, it would cease to exist. Just like a dream ceases when we wake up, realization of the

truth destroys the existence of the mind. With the realization that I am not the body and I am not the mind, I became the spectator of the two. It is not that the body and mind disappeared, but they appeared just as a dream, an illusion, a myth, a magical display of the Divine.

Is a theatrical performance on the stage true or untrue? Of course it is true. There is a stage; there are actors, music and lights. But on the stage, we see marriages and murders, and much more – are these true? Even a child knows the meaning of a movie or a drama. I wondered why did it take me such a long time - five decades - to realize the truth that everything was a drama of the Divine Power?

When I look at the amazing mountains, vast oceans, flowing rivers, beautiful gardens, lovely birds, colourful fish, and countless stars, I wonder why it is so difficult to understand the omnipresence, the omnipotence and the omniscience of a Power that manifests all around us. The entire universe is so complicated that despite we human beings having a mind, we are unable to comprehend the Power that has created all of this. In fact, my purpose I realized was no more to comprehend the Power, but rather to realize myself. With the realization of the truth, that I am nothing – alone the power exists, one part of the

unsolvable equation is demystified – realization of the self. This starts the journey of the second part, the realization of the truth about the Creator.

If I took an apple in my hand, I cannot guess how many seeds are inside, until I cut it open and then count the seeds or take the help of technology to scan it. Anybody can count the seeds in an apple, but can we count the apples in a seed? Modern science has grown, but I discovered that even science has been humbled by spirituality, by the truth of who we are. We are nothing, but it is that everything that manifests as you and me. Because we are so busy in this magical theatrical world, we have forgotten that the realization of the truth of "who we are" is the real purpose of our life.

All these helped me realize a little bit of the second loop of who I am. I am nothing but energy, divine energy that appears as this body and mind. I am the very power that created me. How is this possible? If a little spider can create its own web from itself, why can't the Divine Energy that has created the whole Universe appear as you, me and the world?

The power in me and the power in you are both the same. We appear as two different individuals just like a ring

appears to be different from a chain, but both are essentially gold. Realization of the truth is so strong that we become absolutely convinced of who we are and we realize who we are not. We are not this body and mind that we appear to be. We are the Divine Energy. These two loops together complete the process of the realization of the truth.

I realized that we human beings live with a strong identity of "I". I am Mr. Watson. I am a millionaire. I am the most powerful. I am the most intelligent. The ego of "I" becomes the first barrier to overcome. When we realize the ego is what causes us misery, we start the journey of seeking the truth. Humility teaches us that we are nothing. The "I" is a temporary existence between birth and death. Eventually, nothing is mine. Those who transcend the ego realize that we never die. We are not the body that we wear. We are the ones who wear the body and we keep wearing new bodies as we take birth again and again. This realization at least leads people to living a life of ethics and values, hoping for a better afterlife, their next journey, if it ever exists. The Law of Karma has gained global popularity and is no more a doctrine of Hinduism or Buddhism. The western world too believes that what goes around comes around. Because you reap what you sow, you can't escape from the fruit of your own actions and since the body perishes, the only

option to rely on is that the mind is reborn in a new body. The mind enjoys the fruits of its previous actions in its new form.

After we demolish "I", we are left with ME – the Mind and Ego. We transcend the physical body, but we feel that we are the mind that escapes at death, only to be reborn. I realized that while this would give us a better life as we live life after life, this would not liberate us. It would not fulfil our ultimate purpose. It is only when we transcend ME to realize we are HE (Holistic Energy), then we are liberated and we realize that the energy within us unites with the Holistic Energy. I realized that for those who realize the truth, there is no rebirth, there is no karma. Because you realize that the mind is an illusion and none of the actions are yours, you are free from all actions of the past. You transcend these as you realize that I am just a manifestation. I do nothing. Therefore, I do not expect fruits of my action because they are not my actions. I am just an instrument, a manifestation of the Divine. I surrender my identity, my ego, mind and body and live with the realization that I am a tiny particle of the universal energy. When we overcome the ignorance that we have always lived with – that we are this body and mind – we transcend all past actions and they just drop like pebbles in the sea.

All these are parts of that puzzle that were put together to finally appear as the whole picture. It is amusing when people ask the question, "What brought about your realization of the truth?" Only one piece of a puzzle can't solve the entire puzzle. But when all the pieces are put together, the picture appears. Of course, as the puzzle starts taking shape, you start seeing the picture. But you need all the pieces to be in place to solve the entire puzzle - to realize the truth.

It was so natural for me to say "I am Ravi" when somebody shakes my hand to introduce themselves. After realization of the truth, I feel like I am saying a lie when I introduce myself as Ravi Melwani. That is not who I am. I feel like I am saying I am Prada, just because I am wearing a Prada T-shirt. Neither am I Prada, which is my T-Shirt, nor am I Ravi Melwani – that is my body, my identity! I have realized that I am the energy, the Atman, or the soul in Ravi and I consciously introduce myself as AiR, the Atman in Ravi.

It is strange! People chase and hoard money, and even cheat the world to become rich only to finally leave it all behind…. Why? This is because they live a life of ignorance. We are all intelligent enough to know that we come empty handed and we go empty handed. But

because we don't realize the truth, we forget to live how we should be living.

Living as “I” and believing that everything is “mine” - is a recipe for misery. It leads us on a path of desire and lust. We think that this is what will give us true happiness, but unfortunately, this is an illusion. Every time we walk for miles in a desert, searching for the oasis that we see in the distance, we are heartbroken to realize that it was only a mirage. Many millionaires of the world will admit that money is important, but more money is not equal to more happiness. Happiness comes from contentment, and ultimate happiness comes from realization of the ultimate truth of who we are and liberation from miseries of ego, mind and body which we are not.

People find realization of the truth so difficult, even impossible. How can we all be a manifestation of the one Divine? I love the analogy of one sun. When we keep a bucket of water, we see the reflection of the sun. If there are 10 buckets, we see 10 identical reflections. It is one sun that can reflect in millions of buckets. Each bucket is like a human body. The water inside the bucket is our state of mind. If the water is still, we can see a perfect reflection. If the water has ripples, then the sunlight reflected is like an agitated consciousness in our mind. It is for us to realize

that our body is like the bucket and we reflect the divine consciousness through our mind.

Everything that I studied, introspected, meditated, and investigated – whether it was questioning my mind, reflecting on my thoughts, meditating on my inner voice, studying scientific theories, doing a virtual anatomy of the body, an analysis of the mind, studying religion, scriptures, and talking to Masters – all roads of my study and investigation led me on to the simple truth that I was not the I that I always thought I was. It was very simple. I had the answer to the question – Who am I? I am the Divine Energy, I am a dot of that Energy and so are you. We are all Energy particles manifesting as different people and things. And we all are part of this Divine cosmic drama that is produced and directed by the Creator, which is beyond human comprehension. My Quest to realize the truth and to answer the question "Who am I?" came to an end.

I now live a life of complete clarity that I am not I. I appear as the ego. I appear as what people think I am . But I am just Divine Energy. I will continue to play my part in this body mind complex till the Divine producer/director wishes. And when the final day of life arrives, at death, if it be the Divine Will, I will be liberated.

As of today, there is still a war – a constant tug of war between the body and mind complex that is not me and the Energy that is me, driven by the intellect. It is not easy. It is not that there is only an ecstasy of joy and peace. There is a challenge. There is a war. There is a constant struggle to live a life of realization, but the reward is liberation. I continue to live each day, each moment trying to live like a realized Soul, not like a body and mind. When my body seeks something, through the intellect, I make the body realize that this is transitory. When my mind is agitated, my intellect tries to console the mind. I try to take charge of my senses - the five horses of my life chariot - through the reins of my intellect, which is led by the Divine Power. Sometimes I succeed; sometimes I fail. But eventually, my realization makes me live as HE, the Holistic Energy, not I – the body, not ME – my Mind and Ego.

May the thoughts that I have shared in this little book help you be liberated from all the prisons of misery and sorrow as you go on a quest to realize the truth: the truth that we are not those that we think we are.

Who are we? We are Divine Energy!

“If 'I' am not the body,
this is known when 'I' die.
And the mind is invisible.
It is 'me' that's a lie.
Then the question that faces me is
WHO AM 'I'? –
for I just realized I am not I.”

POEM – I Am Not I

I am not I. Who am I?

I am not who I am!
I have a body, but am I the body?
I have a mind, but am I the mind?
I have an ego, but am I the ego?
Who is the me that I am?

Am I a butterfly? No that's not me.
Am I a bee? No that's not me.
Am I a tree? No that's not me.
I am me!
Who is the me that I am?

I am not who I think I am
I am an Indian – No, that's my nationality
I am a Hindu – No, that's my religion
I am a male – No, that's my gender
I am not who I think I am!

I am not my car
I know what I am not
I am not my house
I know what I am not

Poem

What I am not, I know
But I know not who I am

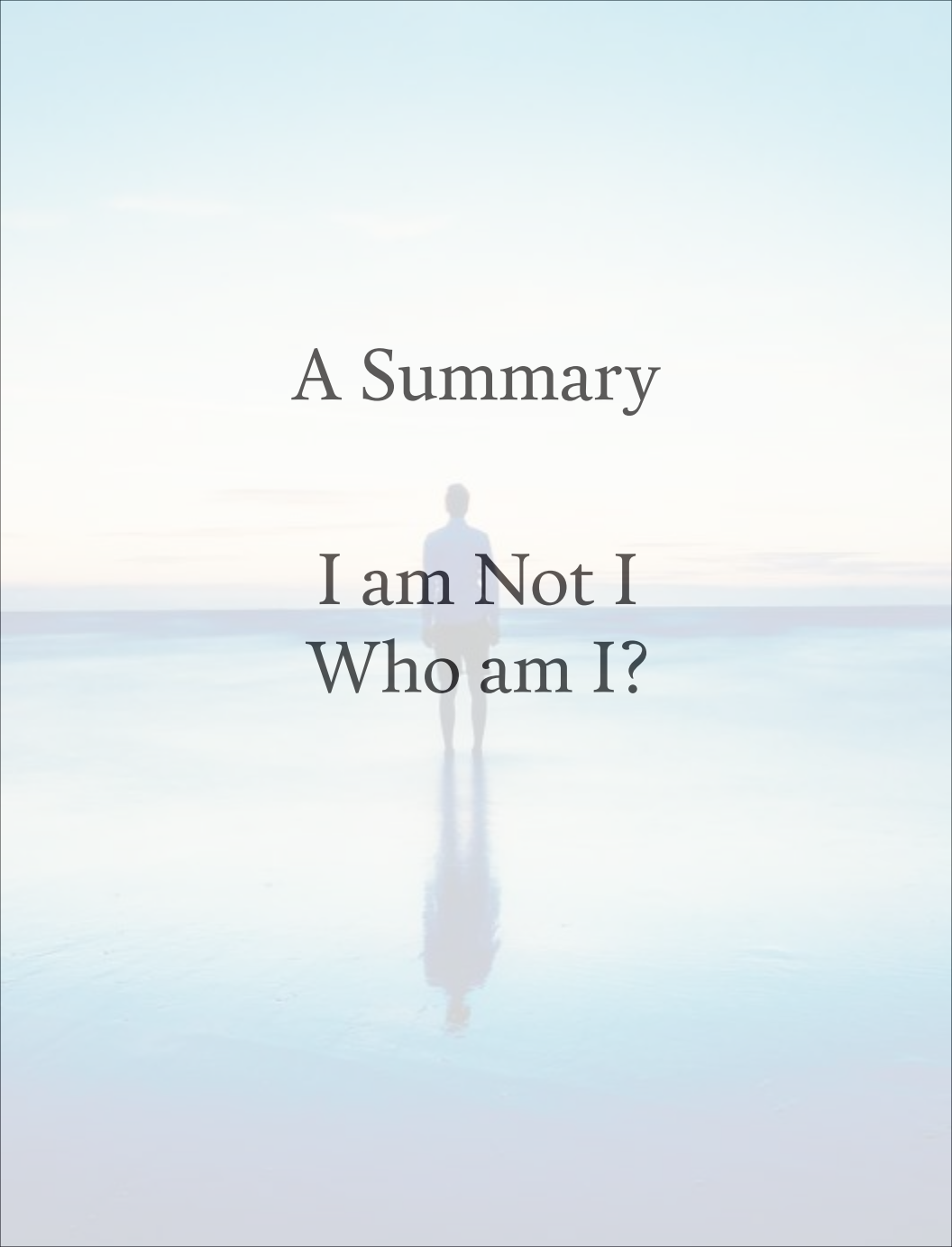
I have eyes that can see
But the eyes are not me
I have limbs that can walk
But it's not me who does the talk
These are mine, but not me
Who is the me that I am?

I am not the Ego
That's my identity
I am not the body and mind
That's not ME
I am the Holistic Energy
I am "HE"
I am not the 'I' that I thought I was
Who am I?
I Know Who I Am!

– AiR

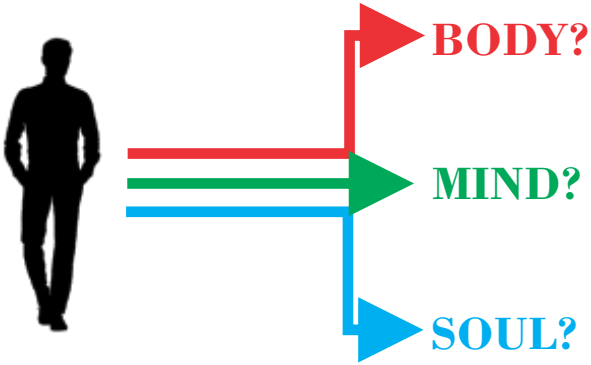
A Summary

I am Not I
Who am I?



WHO AM I?

This is Me!



But Who am I?

Am I Ravi? – That's my name

Am I a Male? – That's my gender

Am I an Indian? – That's my nationality

Am I a Businessman? – That's my occupation

Am I the son of Mr. & Mrs. Melwani? – These are my relationships

Who am I?
If I am not my name, my body, my mind,
the relationship that I enjoy with my near and dear ones,
my profession, my occupation, or my education,
then who am I? We all think we are "ME". But who is this "ME"?

WHO AM I?

WHO ‘I’ AM NOT?

I am not my House

I am not my Clothes

I am not my Car

HIM
I am not Him

ME

YOU
I am not You

I am not myBody

I am not my Mind

I am not my Money

I clearly know who I am NOT.
So then, who am I?

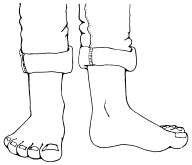
AM I THE BODY?
An Anatomy

My Hands

My Eyes

Even without these, I still exist!

My Ears



My Feet

The anatomy continues virtually.

My Blood

My Flesh

My Bone

Bone Marrow

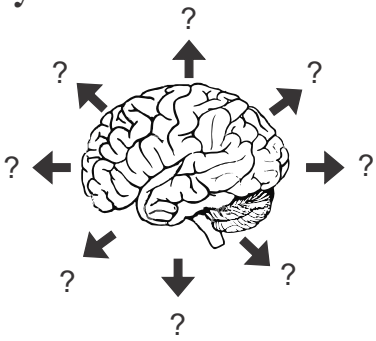
As I peel ME (My Body) virtually,
I find nothing!
There is No ME (I escape!).

So, I have a Body.
But I am not the Body!

AM I THE "MIND"?
An Analysis

Where is my mind?

We can see the brain



But we cannot see the Mind?

Mind is the Subtle Part of Our Body.
100 Billion Neurons of Grey Matter
Transmit & Receive Signals.

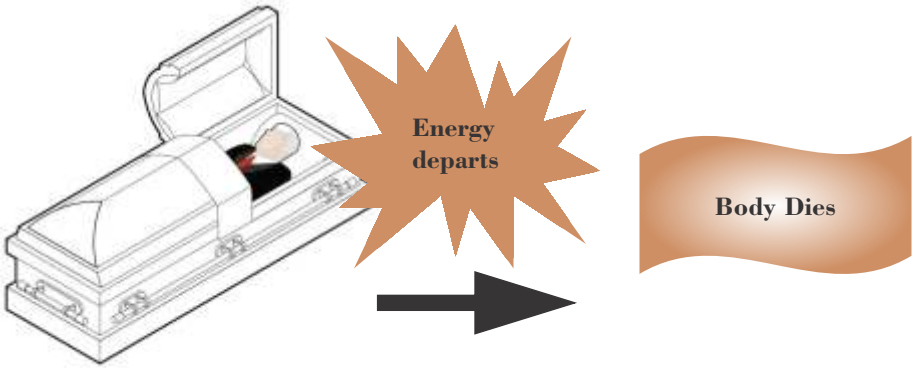
I know I have a Mind!
It dreams, wanders, worries!
But where is my Mind?

It extends beyond the Brain
It is in every cell of the Body

But even without a Mind,
I can exist!

So I have a Mind! But I am not the Mind!

At Death…,
What happens to "ME"?

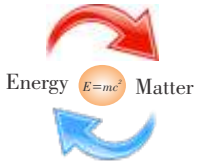


This is "my" Dead "Body"! Where am I?
At Death, my Body is intact.
Everybody says "I" departed…,
passed away…, moved on
Where did "I" go? And Who went?

Body is here! That's not me!
Mind… we can't find! But Mind is not me
"I" seem to be the Life Energy
As long as "I" was there,
the Body had breath
When "I" left – Death happened
"I" am the Life Energy!

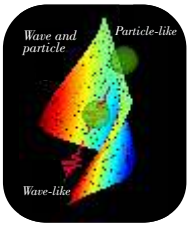
WHAT DOES SCIENCE SAY?

$E=mc^2$



Science says that Matter and Energy are interconvertible.

Wave–Particle Duality



Scientific experiments show particles transforming into waves and vice-versa.

We have a new body every 5-7 years.

All our body cells regenerate every 5-7 years.

So, are we the Body?

We are not matter. We are Energy!

We are ENERGY!

AM I CONSCIOUSNESS ?

Body Anatomy

I am not the Body

Mind Analysis

I am not the Mind

Death reveals, “I am Life Energy”.

Science says, “I am Energy”.

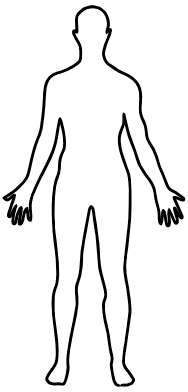
Science says, “Energy appears as Matter”
'I' appear as Body/Mind
But I am Life Energy
Without Energy, Body/Mind can't exist!
I am Consciousness/Life Energy!

'I' exist! Of course, I do!
I have a Body and a Mind
I experience “Life” through Body/Mind
I am the Awareness, the Consciousness

SELF-REALIZATION

I am not the Body! I am not the Mind!!
I am Consciousness – 'Life Energy'
But I exist
in the Body/Mind!

Like a bulb is needed
to understand electricity



A Body manifests Life Energy

I am not I – That's my Identity
I am not ME – Not the Mind + Ego
I am 'HE' – Holistic Energy

Self-Realization Liberates me
from misery and suffering
as the Body/Mind/Ego.

I experience Bliss as Pure Energy!

ABOUT AiR
(The Author)

AiR - *Atman* in RVM or the Soul in Ravi V. Melwani, is an embodied soul whose only mission in life is to realize God.

He was born on October 15, 1966 in Bangalore, as Ravi V. Melwani. At a very young age, he mastered the craft of business and became a very successful businessman who revolutionized retailing in India with the stores Kids Kemp, Big Kids Kemp, and Kemp Fort.

After making millions, he realized that life is not just about making money. He shut down his business at the age of 40, transformed his life to RVM living by the RVM philosophy – Rejoice, Value Life, and Make a Difference. He set up the RVM Foundation and started doing H.I.S. work – Humanitarian, Inspirational and Spiritual work. His mission was to "Make a Difference" in this world before his journey was over.

As a part of RVM's humanitarian initiative, RVM Foundation Hospital was set up in 1998 with an aim to provide free medical treatment and care to the poor, destitute, and needy. The hospital has no cash counter. From the current 250-bed hospital, it will soon grow into a multi-specialty 1000-bed hospital for the poor and destitute. RVM Foundation also has its own destitute homes and orphanage that altogether serve over 700

homeless and suffering residents, providing free shelter, food, medical care, and clothing.

RVM, through the RVM School of Inspiration, has transformed the lives of many people through his motivating talks, inspirational books and videos, and thought-provoking quotes.

RVM built a Shiva Temple in the year 1995 in Bangalore, which is now known as the Shivoham Shiva Temple. Being an ardent believer in Lord Shiva for long, he has written and sung about a thousand bhajans – songs of devotion. He now believes that religion is just a kindergarten of spirituality, and we all have to go beyond religion to truly realize God.

One day, his Guru provoked him to introspect: What is the purpose of life? Is life just meant to seek pleasures and to live and die without any purpose? What happens after death? Will we be reborn? Where is God? Several questions like these took him on a Talaash or a search for the truth. He gave up his life of Achievement and Fulfilment in search of the final peak of life: "Enlightenment".

After a few years of intense search in silence, deep in the

mountains, he realised that we are not this body. We are the Atman, the Soul. He changed his name for the second time from RVM to AiR – the *Atman* in RVM (the Soul in RVM). He metamorphosed to AiR and gave up his entire life as RVM. He started the study of Atman, God, and Life. This led to several realizations that formed his new mission of life – to realize the Truth and to help Seekers realize the Truth.

OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

1. Talaash
2. My Guru, My Mentor, My God on Earth
3. 3 Peaks of Happiness
4. I will Never Die. Death is not "The End"
5. Death is Not "The End". Death is "Liberation"

Visit Google play **or Scan the QR Code to download the AiR - Atman in RVM App.**
www.air.ind.in | air@rvm.co.in

'I AM NOT I. WHO AM I?

Have you ever thought about who you are? Are you Williams? That's your name. Are you British? That's your nationality. Are you a professor? That's your occupation. Are you a millionaire? That's your financial status. Are you a PhD? That's your educational qualification. Who are you? Have you ever stopped to think?

Man has invented everything from submarines that go below the oceans to supersonic jets that fly in the sky. But man has forgotten to discover himself – "Who we truly are?"

This simple book by AiR will make you think, introspect and realize the Truth. We all think we are the body and the mind. Sure! We have a body, and we have a mind, but we are just the observers or "experiencers" of these. The fact is that when we die, we realize that the body is just a dead body. We are the life inside the body. But because of ignorance, we don't realize this when we are alive.

"I am not I" is an interesting book by AiR that will make you realize that you are not just the flesh, bones and skin, but an Energy that lives within!

AiR

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